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For Immediate Release

GREAT DECISIONS '83 OPINION BALLOTS

Final Report on Ballot Tabulation

- To prevent nuclear war, the U.S. should seek immediate agreement on a mutual freeze of nuclear weapons and then negotiate reductions.

- In its dealings with the Soviet Union, the U.S. should negotiate on nuclear arms control despite disagreements on economic and political issues.

- The U.S. should not supply military aid unilaterally to Latin American countries threatened by insurgencies, such as El Salvador and Guatemala.

- In the future, the U.S. should reduce or suspend military aid to Israel if it disapproves of Israel's actions.

- On the question of medium-range missile deployment in Europe, the U.S. should delay deployment until NATO reviews the question and follow West European preferences.

- U.S. troops in Western Europe should be maintained at their present levels, not increased, reduced, or withdrawn altogether.

- To increase jobs for U.S. workers, the U.S. should aim to increase exports, not restrict imports.

- The most effective way of bringing about African economic development is long-term U.S. aid to African agriculture, public health, education, and the like.

- To bring about an end to Vietnam's occupation of Cambodia, the U.S. should work with ASEAN for the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops.

- The U.S. should press Britain to negotiate with Argentina on the future of the Falkland Islands.

These are some highlights of the views expressed, with many dissents and qualifications, in a nationwide mailing of "Opinion Ballots" by participants in the Foreign Policy Association's annual Great Decisions *program for 1983.*

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BACKGROUND ON '83 BALLOT REPORT

Each ballot deals with one of eight current foreign policy topics. Under each topic one or more issues are placed on the ballot, with participants asked to select for each issue the one option, among several offered, which comes closest to their own opinions, or to agree or disagree with each of several options offered.

This year the large number of ballots received made it necessary to sample the returns for tabulation. One of every three ballots cast on the first topic was selected at random, and one of every two ballots cast on each of the other seven topics, for a total of 28,771 ballots tabulated (60,770 cast) by April 30, 1983.

Great Decisions '83 was the 29th in a series conducted by FPA nationwide each year since 1955. In 1976, and again in the six years 1978-1983, **Great Decisions** received the support of the National Endowment for the Humanities for its attention to historical and other humanistic values in foreign policy. In February and March 1983, over 200,000 Americans across the nation joined in study and discussion of the topics, while many more heard radio and TV programs and read newspaper articles which focused on the **Great Decisions '83** issues.

Participants in the discussion groups study the pros and cons of each topic in FPA's **Great Decisions** annual publication and other available sources. Typical participants have more education and more exposure to international affairs than the average citizen. Those responding are far more likely than the average citizen to discuss foreign affairs with others and to be asked for their opinions on foreign affairs. Moreover, they are far more inclined than the average citizen to make their views known to public officials.

It should be emphasized that the **Great Decisions** participants who mail in their ballot on any given issue should not be regarded as a representative sample of all discussion group participants, although the tabulated ballots are a representative sample of all of those cast.

The main themes emerging from the ballots received on each topic are summarized below. The texts of the eight ballots, with complete figures on the responses tabulated, appear at the end of the report.

Topic 1: U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS: The Arms Race and Coexistence

Participants in the Foreign Policy Association's **Great Decisions** program overwhelmingly favored an immediate mutual freeze on nuclear weapons as a way of preventing nuclear war. Three fourths of those who returned their ballots preferred an immediate mutual freeze on nuclear weapons, followed by negotiated weapons reductions, over a buildup of U.S. military strength designed to induce the Soviet Union to negotiate. (In response to the same question, 64% of a nationwide sample interviewed on the telephone by the CBS-New York Times poll in April 1983 selected this alternative; 11% were undecided or failed to answer the question.)

By an even larger margin (82%), **Great Decisions** participants urged negotiations on arms control with the Soviet Union despite disagreement on economic and political issues. And by a very sizable majority (68%), they urged Senate approval of the SALT II treaty, negotiated during the Carter Administration but not ratified. Even on the question of using economic sanctions to try to influence Soviet policy, only 36% agreed, while 54% declared themselves in opposition and 10% either failed to answer the question or qualified their answer in some way.

These findings, like those of a nationwide study of American public opinion on foreign policy conducted in November and December of 1982 by the Gallup organization for the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, indicate a growing preoccupation with peace and arms control on the part of American public opinion. Although the percentages may vary somewhat because of the wording of individual questions, the general trend of public sentiment seems clear.

Topic 2: LEBANON: Shattered State in the Middle East

Asked which policy with respect to the West Bank and Gaza was most likely to bring about long-term peace in the Middle East, **Great Decisions** participants clearly rejected annexation by Israel (17%). Instead, they endorsed some form of self-government for the Palestinians living there, either as an independent state (43%) or in association with Jordan (35%).

If the U.S. disapproves of Israel's actions in the future, 71% indicated the U.S. should reduce or suspend military aid to Israel. And only 37% of respondents wanted the U.S. to play an active role in Arab-Israeli peace negotiations, whereas 60% said the U.S. should act as a moderator only.

Of those responding, 87% wanted to keep some sort of peacekeeping force in Lebanon so long as the Lebanese government requested it.

Topic 3: TRADE & UNEMPLOYMENT: Global Bread-and-Butter Issues

Asked to choose between restricting imports and increasing exports as a way of increasing jobs for American workers, **Great Decisions** respondents overwhelmingly opted for increasing exports. The vote was 88% for attempting to increase exports by negotiating lower tariffs and quotas, and 9% for restricting imports by raising tariffs and quotas, with only 3% failing to answer the question or writing in another alternative.

Sympathy for government subsidies to failing industries was even less evident than sympathy for import restrictions. A majority of those responding (58%) favored government retraining of unemployed workers for new industries, but as many as one third thought that the government should allow market forces to deter-

mine the future of troubled industries and their workers. Less than 7% were in favor of subsidies to keep such industries afloat.

Topic 4: AFRICA SOUTH OF THE SAHARA: Poverty, Hunger and Refugees

In the view of the overwhelming majority of respondents (82%), the most important aim of U.S. policy in Africa should be cooperation with African countries to help solve their problems, not protecting U.S. access to African raw materials (12%) or countering Soviet and Cuban influence in the area (6%). Long-term aid to African agriculture, education, and public health was seen as more fruitful for African economic development than either emergency aid or encouraging the development of free enterprise. Increased food production, education and manpower training, and family planning, in that order, were seen as contributing most to Africa's long-term economic stability.

Topic 5: NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION: Who's Next to Get the Bomb?

A number of different U.S. policies have been proposed as a means of preventing the spread of nuclear weapons to other countries. Participants in the **Great Decisions** discussion program were asked to indicate, for each of seven such policies, whether they thought the policy would have its intended effect.

Respondents put little faith in a policy of supplying conventional weapons to countries in order to keep them from acquiring nuclear weapons; only 29% thought such a policy would accomplish its intended objective. Nor did they put much credence in a policy of supplying nuclear fuels to other countries as a means of keeping influence over them; only 19% thought such a policy would help prevent nuclear proliferation. Only those policies which involved either treaties banning nuclear testing or nuclear weapons, or which tightened rules on inspecting nuclear facilities and taking nuclear materials out of the country, were given any hope of success. Tightening rules on inspection and on U.S. exports of nuclear materials were seen by 85% and 80%, respectively, as helping to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons.

Topic 6: SOUTHEAST ASIA: ASEAN and its Communist Neighbors

Asked which U.S. policy was most likely to bring about an end to Vietnam's occupation of Cambodia, 66% of those responding indicated that working with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) for a withdrawal of Vietnamese troops was most likely to achieve that goal. The remaining ballots were divided between those recommending continued diplomatic and economic isolation of Vietnam (19%), and those recommending the resumption of diplomatic and economic relations with Vietnam without preconditions.

On the matter of economic relations with ASEAN countries, respondents voted, by a substantial majority (71%), to continue most-favored-nation status but no special trade treatment for these countries. But a quarter of those responding were in favor of temporarily removing all restrictions on trade with ASEAN member nations.

Topic 7: INTER-AMERICAN SECURITY: Lessons from the South Atlantic

Congressional reluctance to authorize more military aid for Central American countries is mirrored in the opinions of **Great Decisions** participants who returned their ballots. Some 46% of respondents said the U.S. should not supply military aid at all to countries that are threatened by insurgencies, such as El Salvador or Guatemala, and 30% favored U.S. military aid only in conjunction with other Rio Pact countries. Only 15% said the U.S. should supply military assistance unilaterally, while 10% failed to answer the question, or proposed another policy option.

Opinion was considerably more favorable to a program of economic aid for the Caribbean area. Asked whether the Caribbean Basin Initiative should be approved as is, increased, reduced, or rejected altogether, 46% of the respondents voted in favor of approving a more comprehensive program, and 23% in favor of approving it as proposed. Fourteen percent of the respondents wanted a more limited program, and only 11% voted to reject the proposed program altogether.

A final policy question posed for **Great Decisions** participants concerned the role of the U.S. vis-à-vis the Falkland Islands, and here a large majority (78%) said the U.S. should urge Britain to negotiate with Argentina on the islands' future, now that the war had been won.

Topic 8: WEST GERMANY AND THE U.S.: What's Wrong with the Alliance?

Sentiment among **Great Decisions** participants who mailed in their ballots seems to favor continuation of the status quo in our military relations with Western Europe. Somewhat more than half of the respondents (53%), for example, said U.S. military forces in Western Europe should be maintained at their present levels, though 37% voted in favor of reducing or eliminating such forces. So far as deploying U.S. medium-range missiles in Western Europe is concerned—an issue which has aroused public concern and opposition in a number of West European countries—a majority of respondents (53%) voted to delay such deployment until NATO reviews the question and then to follow the preferences of our West European allies.

On the issue of a "no first use" policy with respect to nuclear weapons in Europe, opinion among respondents was clearly divided, with approximately one third selecting each of three policy options offered: no first use; no first use coupled with a buildup of NATO conventional forces; and retention of the first-use option. Although opinion on this issue is divided, virtually all respondents expressed an opinion; less than 3% failed to answer the question, or wrote in an option other than those offered.

CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS

Those who filled out opinion ballots were asked to give some information about themselves.

As is generally true of members of voluntary organizations, participants in the program are older, on the average, than the U.S. population, and better educated. Not quite one third of those responding were 45 or younger, and half were 61 or older. All but 10% had some college education, and 66% had a baccalaureate or an advanced degree. Women outnumbered men, 62% to 38%. A very high percentage of the group qualify as foreign policy "opinion leaders" in the sense that they say they are asked for their opinion on foreign policy matters often (15%) or sometimes (49%).

Because participants were asked to indicate the first three digits of their zip code on each ballot, it is possible to tell what states contributed most heavily to the tabulated results. The greatest number of ballots were received from Oregon, California, Ohio, Illinois, Florida, Virginia, Colorado, New York, North Carolina, and Arizona, in that order. Zip code information was missing from less than 1 percent of the tabulated ballots.

	Percent
*A. *How many years have you participated in the* **GREAT DECISIONS** *program (that is, attended one or more discussion sessions)?*	
1. This is the first year I have participated.	39
2. I participated in one previous year.	18
3. I participated in more than one previous year.	43
*B. *What is your age?*	
1. 17 or under	3
2. 18 to 30	14
3. 31 to 45	14
4. 46 to 60	18
5. 61 or over	51
*C. *Your sex?*	
1. Female	62
2. Male	38
*D. *What is the highest level of formal education you have completed?*	
1. Some high school (including 4% currently enrolled)	5
2. High school graduate	5
3. Some college (including 10% currently enrolled)	25
4. College graduate	33
5. Advanced degree	33
*E. *How often are you asked for your opinion on foreign policy matters?*	
1. Often	15
2. Sometimes	49
3. Hardly ever	36
F. *One final question. Would you say you have or have not changed your opinion in a fairly significant way as a result of taking part in the* **GREAT DECISIONS *program?*	
1. Have	40
2. Have not	34
3. Uncertain	26

*6-8% nonresponse
**10% nonresponse

The Foreign Policy Association has carried out this national tabulation of opinion ballots as a public service. The results express the views of* Great Decisions *participants, not those of the FPA, which is a private, nonprofit, nonpartisan educational organization and takes no position on issues of U.S. foreign policy.

Opinion ballots have been included in FPA's annual **Great Decisions** since 1955, as a way to encourage participants to make their foreign policy views known to their Washington representatives and to the news media. Since 1976, opinion ballots from across the nation have been centrally collected, tabulated and analyzed, and the results made public by FPA in a special report.

In 1978, processing of the ballots made the transition from hand tabulation to the electronic era. Again this year, computerization of ballots received as of April 30th was performed by Calculogic Corporation, 2929 Broadway, New York, N.Y., which furnished printouts on which this report is based. Opinion ballots received after April 30 are being counted, but unless they alter trends shown in this analysis, a later report will not be issued.

This expression of views by participants in **Great Decisions '83** who have voluntarily taken the time to study and discuss the issues is of special significance to the nation's foreign policy decision-makers. This report is being presented by the Foreign Policy Association to members of Congress and the Executive Branch. It also is being sent to the news media and is available to all interested citizens who wish to receive a copy.

FPA's editors have been assisted in preparing the opinion ballots and in tabulation and analysis of the results, by Dr. Eleanor Singer, noted authority on public opinion research.

Copies of this opinion ballot report can be ordered from the Foreign Policy Association. Please see box with information on how to order.

Eleanor Singer served as FPA's consultant in the preparation of the Opinion Ballots for **Great Decisions '83,** in the tabulation and analysis of the results, and in the writing of the present report.

Dr. Singer is a senior research associate at Columbia University's Center for the Social Sciences. For the past eight years she has been editor of the *Public Opinion Quarterly*, the principal scholarly journal in the field of public opinion research. She has published numerous articles on public opinion and other topics.

FOREIGN POLICY ASSOCIATION 1918

BALLOT STATISTICS*

Topic 1: **U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS** **BALLOTS TABULATED: 3,228**

	Percent
A. Which of the following do you think would be more likely to prevent nuclear war?	
1. Building up U.S. military strength to encourage the Soviets to agree to nuclear arms reductions.	25
2. Seeking immediate agreement on a mutual freeze of nuclear weapons and then negotiating reductions.	74
3. Other, no response.	2
B. A strategic arms limitation treaty, SALT II, was signed by the U.S. and U.S.S.R. in 1979 but never ratified by the U.S. Senate, as required by law. Do you think the Senate should:	
1. Approve the SALT II treaty, or	68
2. Not approve the SALT II treaty?	27
3. Other, no response.	5
C. In its dealings with the Soviet Union, the United States should:	
1. Negotiate on nuclear arms control despite U.S.-Soviet disagreement on economic and political issues.	82
2. Link negotiations on nuclear arms control to U.S.-Soviet agreement on economic and political issues.	16
3. Other, no response.	2
D. In general, do you favor or oppose the U.S. use of economic sanctions, such as restricting trade, to influence Soviet policy?	
1. Favor use of economic sanctions.	36
2. Oppose use of economic sanctions.	54
3. Other, no response.	10

Topic 2: **LEBANON** **BALLOTS TABULATED: 4,340**

	Percent
A. Which of the following proposals do you think would be most likely to bring about long-term peace in the Middle East?	
1. Creating an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and in Gaza, with PLO recognition of Israel.	43
2. Annexation of the West Bank and Gaza by Israel, with limited self-government for the Palestinians living there.	17
3. Association of the West Bank and Gaza with Jordan, with full self-government for the Palestinians living there.	35
4. Other, no response.	6
B. In the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations, the United States should:	
1. Participate actively.	37
2. Simply act as a moderator.	60
3. Other, no response.	3
C. The rebuilding of Lebanon would best be served by:	
1. Keeping the military force consisting of U.S., French, and Italian troops in Lebanon as long as the Lebanese government requests.	43
2. Replacing the U.S.-French-Italian force with a multinational UN force.	44
3. Withdrawing U.S.-French-Italian troops without replacing them with a UN force.	7
4. Other, no response.	6
D. In the future, should the United States:	
1. Reduce or suspend military aid to Israel if it disapproves of Israel's actions, or	71
2. Continue to supply military aid even if it disapproves of Israel's actions?	21
3. Other, no response.	8

Topic 3: **TRADE & UNEMPLOYMENT** **BALLOTS TABULATED: 4,138**

	Percent
A. Which of these would be a better way of increasing jobs for American workers?	
1. Restricting imports of foreign products into the United States through increased tariffs and quotas.	9
2. Increasing exports of American products abroad by negotiating lower tariffs and quotas with other countries.	88
3. Other, no response.	3
B. What should the U.S. government do about industries that are having a hard time these days?	
1. Give government subsidies to keep these industries going.	7
2. Retrain unemployed workers for new industries.	58
3. Let market forces determine the future of these industries and their workers.	33
4. Other, no response.	3

Topic 4: **AFRICA SOUTH OF THE SAHARA** **BALLOTS TABULATED: 3,703**

	Percent
A. The most important aim of U.S. policy in Africa should be:	
1. To protect U.S. access to African raw materials.	12
2. To oppose Soviet and Cuban influence in the area.	6
3. To work with African nations in helping them solve their problems.	82
4. Other, no response.	1
B. Which U.S. policy would do most to help bring about African economic development?	
1. Providing aid in emergencies and for refugee relief.	3
2. Providing long-term aid to African agriculture, education, public health, etc.	66
3. Encouraging the development of free enterprise in the African states.	29
4. Other, no response.	2

	Percent Ranking First
C. Which of the following would contribute most to Africa's long-term economic stability? Rank the following from "1" (most important) to "7" (least important).	
a. Increased food production	39
b. Development of infrastructure—roads, railroads, communications	5
c. Industrialization	1
d. Scientific research and technology	2
e. Education and manpower training	22
f. Family planning	16
g. Domestic political and economic reforms	10

***Totals may not add to 100% because of rounding.**

Topic 5: **NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION** — **BALLOTS TABULATED: 3,591**

Percent

A. *Which of the following U.S. policies do you think would help prevent the spread of nuclear weapons? For each policy, indicate whether it would or would not help prevent the spread of nuclear weapons.*

a. *Offering other kinds of weapons to countries to keep them from acquiring nuclear weapons.*

Would	29
Would not	65
No response	6

b. *Continuing to supply nuclear fuels to other countries in order to keep U.S. influence over them.*

Would	19
Would not	74
No response	7

c. *Offering treaty protection to countries to keep them from acquiring nuclear weapons.*

Would	63
Would not	29
No response	8

d. *Signing a treaty stopping all testing of nuclear weapons.*

Would	73
Would not	23
No response	4

e. *Supporting agreements to prohibit nuclear weapons in all countries in a single part of the world, like the Middle East or Latin America.*

Would	58
Would not	35
No response	7

f. *Tightening rules on taking nuclear materials out of the United States.*

Would	80
Would not	16
No response	4

g. *Tightening rules on the inspection of nuclear power plants and other nuclear facilities.*

Would	85
Would not	12
No response	3

Topic 6: **SOUTHEAST ASIA** — **BALLOTS TABULATED: 3,452**

Percent

A. *Since 1979 the United States has tried to end Vietnam's occupation of Cambodia. Which of the following policies is most likely to achieve this goal?*

1. Continuing our policy of isolating Vietnam diplomatically and economically. 19
2. Working with ASEAN for withdrawal of Vietnamese troops. 66
3. Resuming diplomatic and economic relations with Vietnam without preconditions. 14
4. Other, no response. 1

B. *With respect to trade with ASEAN countries, the United States should:*

1. Temporarily remove all trade restrictions. 25
2. Continue most-favored-nation status but give no special trade treatment to ASEAN countries. 71
3. Other, no response. 4

HOW TO ORDER

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Topic 7: **INTER-AMERICAN SECURITY** — **BALLOTS TABULATED: 3,268**

Percent

A. *Now that Britain has won the war over the Falkland Islands, do you think the United States should:*

1. Support Britain against Argentina, or 15
2. Press Britain to negotiate with Argentina on the islands' future? 78
3. Other, no response. 8

B. *The Reagan Administration has proposed a Caribbean Basin Initiative. Do you think Congress should:*

1. Approve the Administration's program as is, 23
2. Approve a more comprehensive program, 46
3. Approve a more limited program, or 14
4. Reject the proposed program altogether? 11
5. Other, no response. 6

C. *What should the United States do about supplying military aid to governments in Latin America that are threatened by insurgencies, like El Salvador or Guatemala?*

1. Should supply military aid to such governments unilaterally. 15
2. Should supply military aid only if other Rio Pact countries decide to do so. 30
3. Should not supply military aid to such governments at all. 46
4. Other, no response. 10

Topic 8: **WEST GERMANY AND THE U.S.** — **BALLOTS TABULATED: 3,051**

Percent

A. *If there is no nuclear force reduction agreement for Europe in 1983, the United States should:*

1. Deploy the 572 Pershing IIs and cruise missiles in Europe as scheduled. 27
2. Delay deployment until NATO reviews the question and follow West European preferences. 53
3. Not deploy the 572 Pershing IIs and cruise missiles. 18
4. Other, no response. 2

B. *It has been suggested that the United States should pledge not to be the first to use nuclear weapons in Europe. Do you think the United States should:*

1. Adopt a "no first use" policy, 32
2. Adopt a "no first use" policy along with a buildup of NATO conventional forces, or 33
3. Retain the option of first use of nuclear weapons in Europe? 32
4. Other, no response. 3

C. *The United States now has substantial military forces stationed in Western Europe for defense purposes. Under present circumstances, do you think the commitment of U.S. forces in Europe should be:*

1. Increased, 6
2. Kept at the present level, 53
3. Reduced, or 26
4. Ended altogether? 11
5. Other, no response. 5